

VZCZCXYZ0016
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLP #1619/01 1630814
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 120814Z JUN 07
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3926
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 6847
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 4190
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 8074
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 5324
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2561
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 2706
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 3502
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4661
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 5187
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 9787
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA 0355
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUMIAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 001619

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/11/2017
TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BL](#)
SUBJECT: MAS STEAMROLLS CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY COMMISSIONS

REF: LA PAZ 436

Classified By: Charge d'Affairs Krishna Urs
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

11. (SBU) The Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) appears to have adopted a new strategy to steamroll their proposals through the Constituent Assembly's (CA) twenty-one commissions, violating the voting rules agreed upon on February 14, 2007 (reftel). The strategy is aimed at preventing PODEMOS, the main opposition party, from getting its proposals out of commission and into the plenary. PODEMOS appears willing to confront this MAS strategy in the CA and in the streets. However, most analysts believe the MAS wants a prompt conclusion to the CA so that new elections can be called as soon as possible (the MAS wants elections in early to mid 2008). Recognizing that PODEMOS could use their new strategy as a tactic to stall progress in the CA, the MAS may abandon it simply to ensure that their election aspirations are not compromised. End Summary.

The Rules of the Game

12. (U) According to the CA's voting rules, commissions are supposed to issue their formal reports by absolute majority (fifty percent plus one), but commissions may also publish minority reports. The plenary can then debate both the majority and minority reports. To prevent PODEMOS, the main opposition party, from issuing a minority report, the MAS is splitting its delegates in some commissions; some MAS delegates vote for the MAS, primary proposal while others vote for an alternate non-PODEMOS proposal. With this new strategy, no proposal receives an absolute majority as required under the CA's voting rules.

The New MAS Strategy

13. (U) On June 7, in the first and perhaps most important commission called "Vision for the Country," the MAS supported two proposals, its own and that of a small minority party. The party affiliations in the commission breakdown as follows:

Political Party	Number of Delegates
MAS	8
PODEMOS	3
CN	2
AS	1
Total	15

(Note: The AS and CN are small parties with only six and five delegates respectively in the entire CA. End Note).

The "majority" MAS proposal won with six votes. PODEMOS' three delegates supported their own plan. The AS party put forward a plan that garnered the support of the two CN delegates giving the plan a total of three votes, equal to PODEMOS. The two MAS delegates who did not vote for the MAS, primary proposal then cast their vote for the AS plan. By splitting its votes the MAS was able to prevent the commission from publishing the PODEMOS minority report. The MAS has used this strategy in other commissions as well.

The Opposition's Counter-Strategy

14. (C) On June 11, poloff spoke to a PODEMOS delegate to the "Vision for the Country" commission who explained the opposition's strategy. PODEMOS has filed a formal complaint within the commission and with the CA's Directive arguing that the MAS has violated the CA's voting rules (reftel). (Note: The Directive is comprised of eleven delegates, seven of which are MAS. End Note). According to the delegate, the directive may meet late June 11 or June 12 in the morning. Given the crucial nature of the Vision commission, PODEMOS has decided to halt all work until it receives a "favorable" ruling. If neither the commission nor the directive rule in PODEMOS, favor, PODEMOS is prepared to resort to "regional action," meaning they would activate their base in the four eastern departments where the MAS faces its stiffest opposition. PODEMOS is also prepared to counter the MAS by adding language into its proposals within commissions that the MAS cannot split its vote.

Comment

15. (SBU) The MAS has clearly violated both the letter and the spirit of the February 14 voting rules agreement, an agreement that took seven months to achieve. However, the accord actually does not address the scenario of commissions where no absolute majority is achieved. Nonetheless, there are reasons for the MAS to back down and allow the commissions to revote. If the MAS does not back down, the CA will be delayed further by opposition protests coming from within and without. Most analysts believe the MAS wants a prompt conclusion to the CA so that new elections can be called as soon as possible (the MAS wants elections in early to mid 2008). Recognizing that PODEMOS could use their new strategy as a tactic to stall the CA, the MAS may abandon their strategy simply to ensure that their election aspirations are not compromised. End Comment.

URS